

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY MUSCAT PRIORITY

CINCUSNAVEUR PRIORITY

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

USCINCEUR PRIORITY

CINCUSAFE PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 015018

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, UK, XO

SUBJECT: MASIRAH AND 1949 US-UK AGREEMENT ON RECIPROCAL
USE OF AIRFIELDS

1. REEVE OF BRITISH EMBASSY TELEPHONED DEPARTMENT
OFFICER TODAY TO NOTE HMG'S VIEWS ON APPLICABILITY
OF 1949 US-UK AGREEMENT ON RECIPROCAL USE OF AIRFIELDS
TO OUR CURRENT REQUEST ON MASIRAH -- A QUESTION WHICH HE
SAID HAD ARISEN IN CONNECTION WITH DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN
EMBASSY LONDON AND FCO OFFICIALS.

2. HMG VIEW, HE SAID, IS THAT THE 1949 AGREEMENT MERELY
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GOVERNS ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS WHICH APPLY WHEN

AIRCRAFT OF ONE OF OUR COUNTRIES USE AN AIRFIELD BELONGING TO THE OTHER. IT DOES NOT DEAL WITH AUTOMATIC USAGE, FOR WHICH PRIOR APPROVAL -- BASED, INTER ALIA, ON POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, SUITABILITY AND AVAILABILITY OF SUPPORT FACILITIES, ETC. -- IS REQUIRED (UNLESS, OF COURSE, USAGE IS GOVERNED UNDER SOME MORE SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENT).

3. REEVE ALSO HINTED THAT THE QUESTION OF THE APPLICABILITY OF THE 1949 AGREEMENT TO THE CURRENT QUESTION OF MASIRAH USAGE MIGHT BE RAISED BY JOURNALISTS IN VIEW OF JAN 21 WASHINGTON POST STORY. IF QUERIED, AND IF THE US HAS NO OBJECTION, HMG WOULD SIMPLY SAY: QUOTE: THERE IS A LONG-STANDING AGREEMENT (BETWEEN THE US AND UK) COVERING PURELY ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS TO BE APPLIED IF EITHER COUNTRY IS GIVEN APPROVAL TO MAKE USE OF THE OTHER'S AIRFIELD FACILITIES. THIS AGREEMENT, OF COURSE, IS BEING TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN CONNECTION WITH OUR (I.E. UK) CONSIDERATION OF THE U.S. REQUEST FOR OCCASIONAL USE OF THE RAF AIRFIELD AT MASIRAH. UNQUOTE.

4. DEPARTMENT OFFICER INDICATED TENTATIVE APPROVAL OF UK PRESS LINE PENDING A CHECK WITHIN USG TO DETERMINE IF US INTERPRETATION OF 1949 AGREEMENT ACCORDS WITH UK'S. KISSINGER

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